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Dear Dr. Summerson:

I attended the May 3rd Bechtel sponsored meeting at the Suncoast Casino. The purpose was an overview of DOE peer review of waste package materials performance. Dr. Payer put the following phase on the board; "GOAL is (a) long isolation period followed by (b) controlled, slow release," in regard to waste packages stored in the drifts.

1 [It is obvious that there is little or no attention being given to accidents, electrical or mechanical malfunctions. In the event of these unforeseen incidents there very well might be a short isolation period followed by a fast, uncontrolled release. This could be caused by a seismic event or an electrical failure shutting down the ventilation now required to lower the temperature and dissipate the unexpected humidity and moisture. This same humidity moisture is corrosive, containing brine and microorganisms.

Would human beings be able to enter the tunnel to retrieve these waste packages in the event the train and/or gantry malfunctioned? How can the DOE depend on robotics when there has been little attention given to accidents and malfunctions? If there is backup power to the project is there enough to fully operate all electrical machines and other equipment? It was mentioned that brine and microorganisms would degrade the waste packages made up of titanium and stainless steel. What attention has been given to the corrosive effects on the electrical and mechanical systems? For example, rails, switches, circuit breakers, wire connections or metal less able to resist corrosion than titanium or stainless steel?

It is obvious that since the tunnels will be open for 300 years to assure retrievability of the waste packages, that an accident or malfunction will make this impossible.]

I will be attending the public hearing June 5, 2001 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM and would like these questions and comments to be a part of the agenda.

Sincerely,

Frank Perna

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cc: Richard Meserve, U.S. NRC Chairman
Spencer Abraham, U.S. DOE Secretary
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